

When Parliament met at the beginning of the new year a contest arose between the party of the Duke of Lancaster, who favoured the proposed expedition to Spain, and the party of Bishop Spencer, who wished to support the crusade in Flanders with the parliamentary taxes. Both sides were partly in the right. On the one hand, the invasion of the Peninsula was a useless waste of blood and treasure, and left our coasts undefended. Flanders was the right point of attack. On the other hand, it would be a disgraceful hypocrisy on the part of Parliament to pretend to vote the national money for a crusade, when the real motive for sending the national troops to Flanders was the lust of worldly conquest, and it would be indecorous to commit the national army to the command of an ecclesiastic. The Lords mostly favoured the Duke of Lancaster and his scheme. They were beginning to transfer their jealousy from him to Eichard. The Commons, on the other hand, were strong for Flanders and the Bishop. They still feared and hated the Duke, they saw how useless the Spanish expedition must prove, and they regarded Bishop Spencer as something of a hero. His fiery and successful raid on the Eastern Counties had given rise to the belief that he was a good general, while John of Gaunt had again and again proved himself the reverse. The knights of the shires were not influenced by Wycliffe's protests against the crusade ; on the other hand, the majority were probably not fanatical Churchmen or Papists, for the last House of Commons had insisted on the withdrawal of an ordinance against the Wycliffites. The House considered it a practical and patriotic plan to make use of the money raised by the sale of pardons, for the recovery of Flanders. They accordingly voted that the taxes should be applied to fitting out an expedition \* for the succour and comfort of Ghent; ' that this body should be joined to the crusading army levied by the Pope's bulls, and the whole put under the command of the Bishop of Norwich. They insisted that he should not be accompanied by any of the King's uncles. The last condition was the subject of a bitter and prolonged controversy between the two Houses, The Commons were determined that the taxes and the army should not be entrusted to John of Gaunt, while the secular